

THE JUNE MAGAZINES.

"THE ATLANTIC." From the paper on "The Hamlets of the Stage," we quote the following about the actor Betterson:—

Thomas Betterson was the first great artist after Burbage in the character of the "mad lover." Once, during Betterson's day, Colley Cibber and Joseph Addison, sitting together in the pit, saw some robust, periwig-pated fellow throw himself into a rage at the sight of the ghost, and the spectator modestly knew his player companion if he thought it natural for "Hamlet" to fall into such a passion with his father's spirit, "which, though it might have astonished, had not provoked him." Both Cibber and Addison joined all contemporary writers in exalting Betterson's praises. "Alas," mourned Cibber, after his death, "I never see Shakespeare's plays played by any other, but it draws from me the lamentation of 'Ophelia'—"

To have seen what I have seen, see what I see." Yet Betterson is described by the pre-Raphaelite painter of old Anthony Aston as having "an ill figure, large head, short, thick neck, stooped shoulders, and long arms. He had little eyes, broad face, a little pock-marked, coarse mouth, thick lips, and large feet. His actions were few, but just. His voice low and grunting, yet he could utter it, by some artful device, so that it surprised universal attention even from those an orange-girl." This was the "Hamlet" of whom all Londoners were so proud. Did ever so many imperfections come into one grace? That genius must have lived in a man who could so transform and conceal such an array of disadvantages. Betterson was the son of a cook in the service of Charles I. He went on the stage in 1659, when he was twenty-four years old. He first played "Hamlet" two years after his debut. His "Ophelia" was the charming Mistress Sanderson, of whom he was known to be enamored, and the town was as much interested in the real as the mimic history. He was married and shortly after, and the young "Hamlet" found in "Ophelia" a sweet and devoted wife. She is said to have been the first woman who appeared upon the public stage.

Up to her time feminine parts were played by boys, and as late as January, 1661, Paris relations. "At the theatre, where was acted 'The Beggar's Bush,' it being very well done. And here the first time I ever saw women come upon the stage."

Betterson's power seems to have been greatest in the counterfeiting, or rather exhibiting, of the stronger emotions. The most impressive points of his "Hamlet" were in the closet scene, particularly where the prince sees the ghost. While he talked to his mother in tones of inexpressible tenderness, his eyes and his eager desire to learn what the distressed spirit would bid him to do "made the ghost equally terrible to the spectator as to himself." Though his complexion was "naturally ruddy and sanguine," when his father's shade appeared he turned ashen, his hair stood on end, and his whole body seemed affected by a tremor inexpressible, which was felt so strongly by the lookers-on that the blood seemed to shudder in their veins likewise. In the first scene with the ghost no ranting marred his tones, but they were full of pathos and amazement into the most tender impatience to know the most touching play, restrained all through by deep filial reverence. But he omitted many beautiful and effective lines, as "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!"

"What may this mean, That thou, dead o'ercome, in complete steel, Revivest thus the glimpses of the moon, Making night hideous?"

These were clearly injurious omissions, but that was the age in which Cibber patched up Richard III for the stage, and Dryden rewrote the Tempest.

At first Betterson played "Hamlet" in the dress of a country squire. He afterwards, in the costume of William of Orange, with streaming shoulder-knots, cocked hat, and enormous powdered wig, walked his short, portly, stooping figure, the "glass of fashion, and the mould of form." Yet he held spectators in tears, awe, and in breathless expectation of intense applause. "And for my part," he said, "I think no applause ought to attentive silence."

For many years he was manager as well as tragedian. When Colley Cibber first appeared before a London audience, he had the misfortune to annoy Betterson by some hollow conceit or act of carelessness. At the end of the performance Betterson inquired the name and salary of the offender, and learning that as yet the young actor was receiving no pay, he directed the business manager to put him down at the shillings a week, and the next day he was dismissed. He would Colley always praised the ladder upon which he first climbed to fame. Betterson was notably kind and encouraging to young and obscure actors. When Robert Wilks went up to London to try his fortune on the stage, and his salary of fifteen shillings a week, he was so overcome by the power and dignity of Betterson's "Melantius," in The Maid's Tragedy, that he trembled and stammered in his part. After the scene was over, Betterson taking his hand, said kindly, "You are a good actor, but do not let it become you; a horse that sets out at the strength of his speed will soon be jaded."

Even experienced actors were overpowered by the genius of Betterson. Barton Booth, on first attempting the part of the ghost, with Betterson for "Hamlet," was struck with such horror that he could not speak the part.

For fifty years, Betterson adorned the stage, and raised it to a higher repute than it had ever before. He was frugal as well as generous; and though his salary was never more than a few hundred pounds a week, he saved several thousand pounds for his declining years. But speculation was rife in those days, and he was induced to risk his property in a commercial venture to the East Indies. He lost it all, and old age found him needy. At seventy he became blind, and Mrs. Barry spoke an epilogue by Rowe. From her sweet lips rippled the lines:—"What has been, though present, praise be dumb, Shall happily be a theme in time to come."

"Had you withheld your favors on this night, Old Shakespeare's ghost had risen to do him right."

"In just remembrance of your pleasures past, Be kind, and give him a discharge at last; In peace and ease life's remnant let him wear, And hang his consecrated bones in care."

The next year, 1710, he had another benefit, which yielded one thousand pounds—an enormous sum for those days. He appeared in his favorite character of "Melantius," and played almost with the youthful power, but he was suffering so much from gout that he was compelled to wear slippers. To lessen the swelling he used an application, which drove the disease to his head, and three days after, the grand old actor was dead. Mrs. Barrett was immediately allowed a pension from the crown; but she was quite crushed by her bereavement, and did not survive to draw her pension. Betterson's great genius, pure genius, and devotion to his chosen art, rendered him worthy of a resting-place among the illustrious dead, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Steele describes the emotions he felt while waiting to witness the interment of one from whose presence of mind, great and noble in human nature, than from the arguments of the most solid philosophers, or the descriptions of the most charming poets. "While I walked in the cloisters, I thought of him with the same concern as if I waited for the return of a friend who had, in real life, done all that I had seen him represent."

Most eminent actors of those days aspired to be like Shakespeare, authors as well. Betterson's original plays did not win him much fame, but his alterations and adaptations of dramas were successful, and many men of letters were proud to take counsel of his taste and experience. So great was his veneration for the memory of Shakespeare, that he made a journey through Warwickshire to gather reminiscences of him, and Rowe acknowledged himself indebted to Betterson for many incidents related in his life of the great poet. Dryden thanks him for "judiciously lopping twelve hundred lines from my tragedy of

Don Sebastian"—perhaps the only instance on record of an author's being given to anybody for cutting him down. And Pope, who was a mere boy when he met the great actor, consulted him about his verses, and painted a portrait of him, which is said to be still in existence. It is a precious relic, a picture of the greatest of England's early actors, painted by the poet who stamped himself more deeply upon his own times than any other English poet has done.

A new ukase, directed against the Polish landowners in the Kingdom of Poland, has just been issued at St. Petersburg. Since the insurrection these landowners have been forced to pay annual "contributions" in addition to the taxes paid by the other inhabitants of the empire. Hitherto these "contributions" which have varied from 8 to 20 per cent. on the landowner's income, have been levied by the military authorities as fines, but they have now been converted by the new ukase into a permanent tax recoverable by ordinary collectors. The landowners are not to be taxed according to the rate but to pay among them a contribution of 2,500,000 roubles (£400,000) a year to the imperial exchequer. As the number of Polish landowners is yearly diminishing, no Pole being now allowed to acquire land in the Polish provinces of Russia, the effect of this arrangement will be to impose a higher tax on each landowner every year. The rate of diminution may be estimated from the fact that in 1861 60 per cent. of the land belonged to Poles, while in 1865 they were in possession of only 50 per cent. only.

General Tölebe, who is the West of St. Petersburg, has prepared a plan for converting Kieff into a strong fortress capable of holding from 50,000 to 60,000 men. This plan has been approved by the Government, and steps are now being taken for carrying it out. The General states in his report that the fortifications of Kieff are at present so weak that a hostile corps from Galicia or the Black Sea could penetrate without difficulty into the heart of the empire before a week's notice could be placed so as to prevent its further progress. It is absolutely necessary, it is pointed out, to make a strategic point as Kieff a strong garrison fortress.

The experiments lately made by the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce as to the liability of percussion caps to explode are merely confirmed the results of all previous experience on this subject—results which are perfectly consistent with theory. The fact is, as has been over and over again established, that percussion caps will not explode unless they are exploded by one, two, three, or five, or a hundred; but each explosion is, so to speak, independent of the other. It is not communicated from one cap to another, and the explosion of one cap does not affect the others. The simultaneous explosion of a number of percussion caps which have been subjected to one and the same time to similar or separate influences. An explosion of this character is not of a formidable character. It is the result of the trial which took place on the 15th of April, 1869, with reference to the destruction by nitroglycerine of the steamship European at Colon, an attempt was made to fix the blame on a small charge of percussion caps, but it was effectually defeated by the evidence which was forthcoming on the side of the caps, and with the result that the caps were found to be in perfect order. In these experiments boxes containing caps were placed in the fire, and there allowed to remain until one by one the caps burst out, a half-pound weight of caps were placed in a red-hot chamber, without giving rise to any explosion; 50,000 caps were placed in an ordinary packing case inside a furnace, but no explosion occurred; heavy masses of iron were allowed to fall on parcels containing each 5000 caps, without producing an explosion; a bag containing 20,000 was laid on the rails of the London and North Western Railway, and an engine passed over it without causing an explosion; and even 100,000 caps in two wooden packing cases placed on the buffers (not spring) of an engine, and struck by a train of several trucks, moving at twelve miles an hour, gave no explosion.

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THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE STOCKHOLDERS OF THE CLAYTON RIVER AND SPRING BRIDGE RAILROAD COMPANY, will be held at HORTON'S HALL, on WEDNESDAY, the 31st inst. at 8 o'clock P. M.

DR. R. F. THOMAS, THE LATE OPERATOR of the Colton Dental Association, is now the only operator in the city who uses the Colton method of extracting teeth, absolutely without pain, by fresh nitrous oxide gas. Office, 167 WALNUT ST.

DR. WYMAN, DENTIST, No. 357 N. 6th Street, opposite Franklin Square, extracts teeth absolutely without pain with Nitrous Oxide Gas, inserts the best teeth, and makes no charge for the use of the gas. Office, 167 WALNUT ST., opposite Franklin Square.

LECTURE ON LIGHT WITH BRILLIANT ILLUSTRATIONS, by the FRANKLIN INST. TITLÉ at the ACADEMY OF MUSIC, TUESDAY EVENING, June 1st 8 o'clock. Tickets to all parts of the house, 50 cents. For sale at the Institute, No. 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 96, 98, 100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150, 152, 154, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 166, 168, 170, 172, 174, 176, 178, 180, 182, 184, 186, 188, 190, 192, 194, 196, 198, 200, 202, 204, 206, 208, 210, 212, 214, 216, 218, 220, 222, 224, 226, 228, 230, 232, 234, 236, 238, 240, 242, 244, 246, 248, 250, 252, 254, 256, 258, 260, 262, 264, 266, 268, 270, 272, 274, 276, 278, 280, 282, 284, 286, 288, 290, 292, 294, 296, 298, 300, 302, 304, 306, 308, 310, 312, 314, 316, 318, 320, 322, 324, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 336, 338, 340, 342, 344, 346, 348, 350, 352, 354, 356, 358, 360, 362, 364, 366, 368, 370, 372, 374, 376, 378, 380, 382, 384, 386, 388, 390, 392, 394, 396, 398, 400, 402, 404, 406, 408, 410, 412, 414, 416, 418, 420, 422, 424, 426, 428, 430, 432, 434, 436, 438, 440, 442, 444, 446, 448, 450, 452, 454, 456, 458, 460, 462, 464, 466, 468, 470, 472, 474, 476, 478, 480, 482, 484, 486, 488, 490, 492, 494, 496, 498, 500, 502, 504, 506, 508, 510, 512, 514, 516, 518, 520, 522, 524, 526, 528, 530, 532, 534, 536, 538, 540, 542, 544, 546, 548, 550, 552, 554, 556, 558, 560, 562, 564, 566, 568, 570, 572, 574, 576, 578, 580, 582, 584, 586, 588, 590, 592, 594, 596, 598, 600, 602, 604, 606, 608, 610, 612, 614, 616, 618, 620, 622, 624, 626, 628, 630, 632, 634, 636, 638, 640, 642, 644, 646, 648, 650, 652, 654, 656, 658, 660, 662, 664, 666, 668, 670, 672, 674, 676, 678, 680, 682, 684, 686, 688, 690, 692, 694, 696, 698, 700, 702, 704, 706, 708, 710, 712, 714, 716, 718, 720, 722, 724, 726, 728, 730, 732, 734, 736, 738, 740, 742, 744, 746, 748, 750, 752, 754, 756, 758, 760, 762, 764, 766, 768, 770, 772, 774, 776, 778, 780, 782, 784, 786, 788, 790, 792, 794, 796, 798, 800, 802, 804, 806, 808, 810, 812, 814, 816, 818, 820, 822, 824, 826, 828, 830, 832, 834, 836, 838, 840, 842, 844, 846, 848, 850, 852, 854, 856, 858, 860, 862, 864, 866, 868, 870, 872, 874, 876, 878, 880, 882, 884, 886, 888, 890, 892, 894, 896, 898, 900, 902, 904, 906, 908, 910, 912, 914, 916, 918, 920, 922, 924, 926, 928, 930, 932, 934, 936, 938, 940, 942, 944, 946, 948, 950, 952, 954, 956, 958, 960, 962, 964, 966, 968, 970, 972, 974, 976, 978, 980, 982, 984, 986, 988, 990, 992, 994, 996, 998, 1000.

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W. H. MABREY. Would respectfully call the attention of his old customers, and all manufacturers of Clothing and Shoes, and others, who use Spoon, Silk, Thread, Cotton, Needles, Shuttles, and Sewing Machine Trimmings generally, that he has removed from No. 122 North Fourth Street to

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AMERICAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC. MRS. FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE WILL READ "AS YOU LIKE IT," FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MERCANTILE LIBRARY COMPANY, WEDNESDAY EVENING, May 26, at 8 o'clock. Admission, One Dollar. Reserved seats in Parquet, Parquet Circle, and Balcony, Two Dollars. The sale of tickets and reserved seats will commence at Trumper's Music Store, No. 506 Chestnut Street, and at the door on the evening of the reading. The audience is requested to be seated ten minutes before 8 o'clock. 18 1/2 Market St.

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PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY. TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT, PHILADELPHIA, PENNA., April 3, 1869. TO THE STOCKHOLDERS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY. All Stockholders, as registered on the Books of this Company on the 30th day of April, 1869, will be entitled to subscribe for 25 Per Cent. of their respective interests in New Stock at Par, as follows:— First. Fifty per cent. at the time of subscription, between the 15th day of May, 1869, and the 30th day of June, 1869. Second. Fifty per cent. between the 15th day of November, 1869, and the 1st day of December, 1869; or, if Stockholders should prefer, the whole amount may be paid up at the time of subscription, and each instalment so paid shall be entitled to a pro rata of the dividend that may be declared on full shares. Third. That every Stockholder holding less than four shares shall be entitled to subscribe for one additional share; and those holding more than a multiple of four shares shall be entitled to subscribe for an additional share. Fourth. All shares upon which instalments are yet to be paid under Resolution of May 12, 1868, will be entitled to their allotment of the 25 Per Cent. at par, as though they were paid in full. THOMAS T. FIRTH, Treasurer. 42 1/2 Market St.

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SPECIAL NOTICES.

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PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY. TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT, PHILADELPHIA, PENNA., April 3, 1869. TO THE STOCKHOLDERS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY. All Stockholders, as registered on the Books of this Company on the 30th day of April, 1869, will be entitled to subscribe for 25 Per Cent. of their respective interests in New Stock at Par, as follows:— First. Fifty per cent. at the time of subscription, between the 15th day of May, 1869, and the 30th day of June, 1869. Second. Fifty per cent. between the 15th day of November, 1869, and the 1st day of December, 1869; or, if Stockholders should prefer, the whole amount may be paid up at the time of subscription, and each instalment so paid shall be entitled to a pro rata of the dividend that may be declared on full shares. Third. That every Stockholder holding less than four shares shall be entitled to subscribe for one additional share; and those holding more than a multiple of four shares shall be entitled to subscribe for an additional share. Fourth. All shares upon which instalments are yet to be paid under Resolution of May 12, 1868, will be entitled to their allotment of the 25 Per Cent. at par, as though they were paid in full. THOMAS T. FIRTH, Treasurer. 42 1/2 Market St.

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PHOTOGRAPHS. WENDEROTH, TAYLOR & BROWN'S. Old established Photographic Portrait Gallery, furnished with every convenience and facility for producing the best quality of a new private passage from the Ladies' Dressing room to the Operating Room. All the requirements of Photography, such as IVORY CUTTERS, MINIATURES ON PORCELAIN, THE NEW CRAYONS originated with this establishment.

WENDEROTH, TAYLOR & BROWN, 512 1/2 Chestnut St. No. 514 CHESTNUT STREET.

VELOCIPEDES. SPECIALTY OF PONY PHAETONS. OF THE LATEST STYLES AND LOWEST PRICES. Together with all the NEW SPRING PATTERNS of first-class PHAETONS AND CARRIAGES, in stock and finish. For sale by S. W. JACOBS, 410 Market St. No. 617 ARCH STREET.

W. H. MABREY. Would respectfully call the attention of his old customers, and all manufacturers of Clothing and Shoes, and others, who use Spoon, Silk, Thread, Cotton, Needles, Shuttles, and Sewing Machine Trimmings generally, that he has removed from No. 122 North Fourth Street to

No. 235 ARCH Street, Where he will be happy to see all, and sell all goods at reduced prices, and defy all competition in prices and quality. 31 1/2 Walnut W. H. MABREY, No. 235 ARCH ST.

CARPETINGS, ETC. 1869 SPRING. 1869 LEEDOM & SHAW, No. 910 ARCH Street. We are now receiving a very large stock of NEW GOODS for

FLOOR OIL CLOTHS, MATTINGS, PATENT'S FURNISHING GOODS. PATENT SHOULDER-SEAM SHIRT MANUFACTORY, AND GENTLEMEN, FURNISHING STORE. PERFECT FITTING SHIRTS AND DRAWERS made from measurement at very short notice. All other articles of GENTLEMEN'S DRESS GOODS in full variety. WINCHESTER & CO., No. 706 CHESTNUT STREET.

H. S. K. C. Harris' Seamless Kid Gloves. EVERY PAIR WARRANTED. EXCLUSIVE AGENTS FOR GENTS' GLOVES. J. W. SCOTT & CO., No. 514 CHESTNUT STREET.

THE IMPROVED SHOULDER-SEAM PATENT SHIRT, manufactured by RICH